

I am very concerned about the abuse of the public airways by Sinclair Broadcasting. I am also outraged that their affiliate here in Western Massachusetts, (WGGB ABC 40 in Springfield) refuses even to accept public comments on programming decisions, let alone respond to such comments.

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation. Their refusal to allow local stations to accept or respond to complaints by citizens in their broadcast area is evidence of their complete arrogance and lack of accountability.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Above all, they demonstrate why we need the FCC to commit to diversifying media ownership and disallow such large media holdings by a single corporation.

Thank you.